

Seattle City Council
Finance and Culture Committee Meeting
2 p.m. Wednesday, April 9th, 2014

Words' Worth
The Poetry Program of the Seattle City Council

Curated by **Judith Roche**

Today's poet is **Daemond Arrindell**

Daemond Arrindell is a poet, performer, and teaching artist. Faculty member of Freehold Theatre and co-facilitator of poetry and theater residencies at Monroe Correctional Complex for men; Writer-In-Residence through Seattle Arts & Lectures' Writers in the Schools Program; and in the fall of 2012, he taught Seattle University's first course in Slam Poetry. He has performed in venues across the country and has been repeatedly commissioned by both Seattle and Bellevue Arts Museums. In 2013, he was selected for the Jack Straw Writers program, published in Specter magazine and was selected for "13 for '13," a joint project between the Seattle Times and KUOW profiling thirteen influential people in Seattle's art scene.

Tips on How to Throw Your Art Away
By Daemond Arrindell

"The role of the artist is exactly the same as the role of the lover. If I love you, I have to make you conscious of the things you don't see." --- James Baldwin

Plant a seed for your daddy issues. Let the shining little boy of your heart be rained into rust by the storm of him. Let depression take root. This is the foundation you will need for the release of things.

Purchase only expensive, handmade journals.
Marvel at the perfection - the snowy blank white field of the page.
See yourself as a 6 year old masterpiece of messes tromping around like pigpen.
Why muddy up the beauty of that page with your gritty grimy humanity?
So if you must start, start.
Then, put down the pen.

Make plans to write on sunday - elaborate & grandiose.
Look forward to them all day Saturday.
Invite friends, give hourly updates of your preparations via Facebook.

Then, one hour before, like a senior set on ruining the prom queen's reputation - back out...because it's raining, or the sun's out, or you hate your hair, or hate your feet or hate yourself.
There is always next weekend, next month, the spring...
you can make time to be an artist in the spring.
For now, just put down the pen.

Pin your self worth to the uplift of others. Become social worker.
Make a living from making other people deal with their fear of living.
In spite of the boulder you store beneath your pillow that you beat your head against in your sleep, know that you are doing good.
If tempted to write about the boulder, begin, but when you draw a blank on an appropriate metaphor for it balancing precariously on the tip of your pen,
just put down the pen.

Exist only in extremes. Set goals at ultra-marathon distance. Chalk anything short of book deal or world tour up to the fact that you're not really an artist anyway.
Just put down the pen.

Don't just get distracted by love - get married.
Gather the urgency of every breath you've ever taken, place it in a ring of gold.
Let that circle cycle into a representation of every breath you will take...
Together....Forever. No pressure.
What better artistic roadblock than THIS level of relationship
that seeps into everything you do, say, think?

And should, if done right.
If it is the fairy tale you vowed to, then you will be lost in the throes.
Poems? Mother Fucker, you've got dishes to do, and anniversaries to remember,
and someone else's whole self-worth to be aware of and you wanna worry
about writing poems?
Please, just put down the pen.

If you have made it this far, the truth is, seeds will always seek the sun
and little boys can climb out of the darkness.

Hold your breath and count to ten so you can let go of the hiccups of self-hatred collecting in
your ventricles.
Then, pick up the pen.

You are only toe-deep in the world right now,
and need to shake off the shackles you've stenciled onto your wrists.
You know the bitter on the tip of your tongue,
but have forgotten the rest of your palette.
Pick up the pen.

Reach further than you have previously.
Bite down into the bright red green mango.
Feel the juice slide down your throat.
Spring is around the corner and your teeth require no sharpening.
Pick up the pen.

Tattoo the words you've always needed billboarded across your life
onto the palace of your skin.
They will be the tugboat of the sound of voice.
They will occasionally capsize into the depths of you as you attempt to cover up the sea, but
watch what they unearth from the trenches every time you make yourself naked and real and
true.

So dig down, and pick up your chin, and your heart and your life,
and give yourself permission to forget all of this.
Forget and forgive, and forget and forgive.
And then, pick up the pen.
Pick up the pen.

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